

What is claimed is:

1 1. A method for compensating non-linearity errors in A/D converter conversion
2 operations associated with converting analog image data from a CMOS imager to
3 digital data, comprising:

4 (a) isolating an A/D converter from the CMOS imager;

5 (b) applying a plurality of analog voltages to the isolated A/D converter, the
6 plurality of voltages ranging from analog ground to a full-scale voltage level;

7 (c) measuring and storing a difference between an output from the isolated A/D
8 converter and a reference value associated with the analog voltage being applied to the
9 isolated A/D converter; and

10 (d) correcting the non-linearity of the isolated the isolated A/D converter using
11 the stored difference.

1 2. The method as claimed in claim 1, wherein the plurality of applied analog
2 voltages are analog ground, 0.25 of the full-scale voltage level, 0.5 of the full-scale
3 voltage level, 0.75 of the full-scale voltage level, and the full-scale voltage level.

1 3. A circuit for compensating errors in correlated double sampling amplifiers
2 and/or A/D converters associated with a CMOS imager having columns of pixels,
3 comprising:

4 a reference voltage source to produce test voltages;

5 a test switch operatively connected between said reference voltage source and a
6 correlated double sampling amplifier;

7 a test switch control line, operatively connected to said test switch, to apply a
8 signal to said test switch, said signal controlling an ON/OFF state of said test switch,
9 said test switch applying a test voltage from said reference voltage source to the
10 correlated double sampling amplifier when the state of said test switch is ON; and
11 a measurement circuit to measure a difference between an output of the A/D
12 converter produced from a test voltage being applied to the correlated double sampling
13 amplifier through said test switch and a reference voltage associated with the applied
14 test voltage to determine an error in the correlated double sampling amplifier and/or
15 A/D converter.

1 4. The circuit as claimed in claim 3, further comprising:

2 an isolation switch operatively connected between a column of pixels and an
3 associated correlated double sampling amplifier to effectively electrically isolate the
4 column of pixels from the associated correlated double sampling amplifier;

5 said isolation switch being in an OFF state when said test switch is in an ON
6 state.

1 5. The circuit as claimed in claim 3, wherein said reference voltage source
2 produces a voltage corresponding to a full-scale voltage level to enable said
3 measurement circuit to determine a gain error in the correlated double sampling
4 amplifier and/or A/D converter.

1 6. The circuit as claimed in claim 3, wherein said reference voltage source
2 produces a voltage corresponding to ground to enable said measurement circuit to

3 determine an offset error in the correlated double sampling amplifier and/or A/D
4 converter.

1 7. The circuit as claimed in claim 3, wherein said reference voltage source
2 produces a sequence of two voltages with a difference corresponding to a full-scale
3 voltage level minus a predetermined maximum anticipated variation voltage to enable
4 said measurement circuit to determine a gain error in the correlated double sampling
5 amplifier and/or A/D converter.

1 8. The circuit as claimed in claim 7, wherein said predetermined maximum
2 anticipated variation voltage corresponds to maximum gain variations.

1 9. The circuit as claimed in claim 3, wherein said reference voltage source
2 produces a sequence of two voltages with a difference corresponding to a
3 predetermined voltage to enable said measurement circuit to determine an offset error
4 in the correlated double sampling amplifier and/or A/D converter.

1 10. The circuit as claimed in claim 9, wherein said predetermined voltage
2 corresponds to maximum offset variations.

1 11. The circuit as claimed in claim 3, wherein said reference voltage source
2 produces a plurality of analog voltages ranging from analog ground to a full-scale
3 voltage level to enable said measurement circuit to determine non-linearity errors in the
4 A/D converter.

1 12. The circuit as claimed in claim 3, wherein said reference voltage source
2 produces a voltage corresponding to a full-scale voltage level to enable said
3 measurement circuit to determine a gain error in the correlated double sampling
4 amplifier and/or A/D converter;
5 said reference voltage source producing a voltage corresponding to ground to
6 enable said measurement circuit to determine an offset error in the correlated double
7 sampling amplifier and/or A/D converter; and
8 said reference voltage source producing a plurality of analog voltages ranging
9 from analog ground to a full-scale voltage level to enable said measurement circuit to
10 determine non-linearity errors in the A/D converter.